

**Abstract of the Disclosure (for U. S. application)**

An image processing method for correcting pixel values of each pixel constituting color image data by shifting, in a coordinate system, a mathematical correction function defining correction values for input values. The method includes the computer-implemented steps of: (1) determining a maximum value and a minimum value among correction values of respective color components obtained for each pixel by using said correction function and then calculating differences between the respective correction values of the respective color components and said minimum value and calculating also a difference between said maximum value and the minimum value; (2) dividing the calculated differences between the respective correction values of the respective color components and the minimum value by the calculated difference between the maximum value and the minimum value, thereby to obtain color ratios for the respective color components; (3) judging, as an inappropriate pixel, any pixel having a correction value overflowing from a predetermined maximum output gradation value and setting the overflowing correction value to the predetermined maximum output gradation value and judging also, as an inappropriate pixel, any pixel having a correction value underflowing from a predetermined minimum output gradation value and setting the underflowing correction value to the predetermined minimum output gradation value; and (4) effecting color balance adjustment so as to cause the correction values of the inappropriate pixel to agree with said respective color ratio thereof.